

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
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R 121432Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8032
INFO AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY SANA
USINT HAVANA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 1698

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINR, PINS, CU, DJ, ET
SUBJ: CUBAN TRAVEL FROM ETHIOPIA TO DJIBOUTI

REF: DJIBOUTI 0522

1. EMBOFF LEARNED DURING CONVERSATION WITH RESIDENT FRENCH MILATT THAT CUBAN AMBASSADOR ACCREDITED TO ETHIOPIA, JOSE PEREZ NOVOA, HAD RECEIVED VISA FOR DJIBOUTI FROM FRENCH EMBASSY, BUT HAD OBJECTED TO NECESSITY OF OBTAINING VISA THROUGH FRENCH. MILATT DID NOT MENTION REQUEST OF OTHER CUBAN DIPLOMATS REFERRED TO IN REFTEL, BUT JUDGING FROM BIO DATA AVAILABLE TO EMBASSY, THEY WOULD BE LOGICAL CHOICES TO ACCOMPANY NOVOA TO DJIBOUTI.

2. ROBERTO BLANCO DOMINQUEZ SPEAKS EXCELLENT FRENCH AND OPENED CUBAN EMBASSY HERE IN JULY 1976. GENER PONCE MAIMO IS AN ADMINISTRATIVE ATTACHE WHO ARRIVED HERE IN JULY 1977. JULIO ACOSTA CABALLERO ARRIVED IN ADDIS IN JAN
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1978, PREVIOUSLY WORKED IN FOREIGN RELATIONS SECTION OF MIDEAST DESK IN FOREIGN MINISTRY (MINREX) IN HAVANA AND HAS TRAVELED WIDELY IN ARAB WORLD. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT HE SPEAKS ARABIC, BUT THIS NOT KNOWN. IT IS CURIOUS THAT BERNARDO NUNEZ SEINO, REPORTEDLY NOVOA'S BODY-GUARD, DID NOT ACCOMPANY HIM TO DJIBOUTI.

3. COMPOSITION OF CUBAN PARTY, RECENT ESTABLISHMENT OF SOVIET-DJIBOUTI DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS AND LENGTHY VISIT TO DJIBOUTI OF HIGH-RANKING ETHIOPIAN DELEGATION ALL LEAD TO SPECULATION THAT CUBA MAY BE CONTEMPLATING, AND DJIBOUTI ACQUIESCING IN ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES. FROM ADDIS PERSPECTIVE, FOLLOWING SOMALI DEFEAT IN OGADEN, ETHIOPIAN PREPAREDNESS TO "DEFEND DJIBOUTI'S SOVEREIGNTY" WITH ITS HEAVILY EQUIPPED ARMED FORCES AND RUMORED CUBAN ATTEMPTS TO BRING ABOUT FEDERATION OF MARXIST-LENINIST STATES IN REGION, IT WOULD MAKE EMINENT SENSE FOR DJIBOUTI TO ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH CUBA TO FORESTALL ATTEMPTS AT SUBVERSION AND PRESERVE ITS FRAGILE INDEPENDENCE.
MATHERON

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